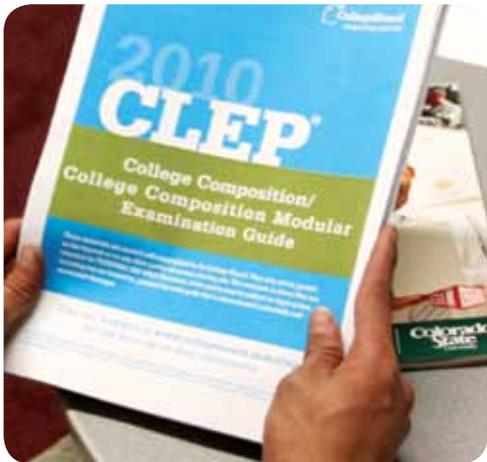


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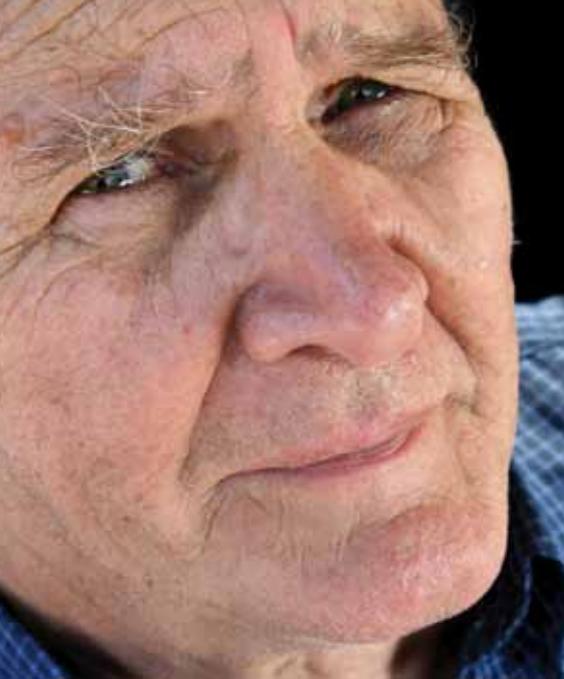
Distance Learning

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LOYALTY, PROTECTION AND SERVICE

FRA IS A CONGRESSIONALLY CHARTERED, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION ADVOCATING FOR CURRENT AND FORMER ENLISTED MEMBERS OF THE U.S. NAVY, MARINE CORPS AND COAST GUARD ON CAPITOL HILL. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP, PLEASE VISIT WWW.FRA.ORG OR CALL 800-FRA-1924.

ON THE COVER

Distance learning has come a long way since the correspondence courses of the mid-1800s, when students depended on slow and unreliable postal delivery services to receive their lessons. Today's digital technology makes learning from afar faster and more convenient than ever, taking distance learning to new heights.

80-20



Eileen Murphy

PARETO'S PRINCIPLE SAYS THAT 20 percent of something yields 80 percent of the results. Nonprofit associations consistently report that 20 percent of the members account for 80 percent of the participating, recruiting, donating, volunteering, and communicating. There are times when an individual actually makes such a tremendous contribution that he or she alone can have the impact of the 20 percent. In this issue, we honor two of those very special people.

Recently, FRA Past National President Abraham Rosenberg's grandson, Dan Rosenberg, contacted FRA Headquarters to see if there were members who remember his grandfather and could share stories. He was glad to know his grandfather's legacy of being an avid FRA member recruiter who understood the need for membership retention was being honored through an annual award given to an outstanding branch. It is as important today as it was in 1935 to recruit and retain members — and many of the challenges are similar. According to the FRA historical publication, *Brotherhood of the Sea*, FRA was in dire straits after the 1934 Convention with both financial and membership retention concerns. Shipmate Rosenberg pledged to work on these challenges, and through his great efforts and those of National Executive Secretary Charles Lofgren, the membership numbers grew substantially. Rosenberg is quoted as saying that the membership drive had led the Association to "take on a new lease on life." The annual Abraham M. Rosenberg Membership Award is given to the branch that epitomizes PNP Rosenberg's legacy. Please read his story on page 15, and if you are interested in communicating with Dan Rosenberg to share stories, please call me at 703-683-1400 ext. 127 for his contact information.

PNP Charles "Chuck" McIntyre was another of the outstanding 20 percent. PNP McIntyre believed that participation was the key to retention — and he certainly lived that belief. He rarely missed an FRA event at the branch, regional or national level, as you'll read on page 31. He was a regular participant of the monthly FRA "Your Voice" teleconferences, avid user of www.fra.org, and consistent communicator with FRA headquarters staff. His suggestions for improvements were appreciated as much as his kudos for a job well done, because all came from his incredible love and dedication to FRA. A couple of weeks before he died, he called to ask a question about a "potential future application on the website" that he believed might help the branch officers. He admitted he wasn't the most tech-savvy person, but was always interested in learning and finding ways to help the Association grow — and giving the branches tools to help in the endeavor. I'm personally honored to have known him and to have considered him a friend and mentor.

Hopefully the legacy of these fine shipmates will inspire others to step up and serve the Association in outstanding ways.

Eileen Murphy is the Director of Marketing and Communications and serves as the Managing Editor of *FRA Today*. Please contact her at eileen@fra.org.

FRA today

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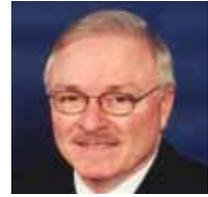
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Joe Barnes

The Moment of Truth

WHEN THE NATIONAL COMMISSION on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform released its report and recommendations on December 1, 2010, the panel appropriately chose to entitle it “The Moment of Truth.” The commission was established in early 2010 and its broad range of cost-saving proposals (available at www.fiscalcommission.gov.) generated significant reaction on Capitol Hill and in the media during the final months of 2010.

The panel developed dozens of recommendations ranging from stopping the abuse of emergency spending (intended primarily to fund war-related expenses) and tax reforms to changes in health care and Social Security programs. And especially important to Medicare and TRICARE beneficiaries is a commission proposal to finally fix the faulty formula for setting physician reimbursement rates that affect access to care for many retirees throughout the U.S.

There are also proposals that, if enacted as legislation, would increase costs for TRICARE for Life beneficiaries and impact other retirement programs including a new high-five annual pay average for determining military retired pay (vice the current high-three formula), deferring receipt of retired pay cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) until age 62, and revamping the basis for measuring inflation via the Labor Department’s Consumer Price Index (CPI).

These are serious proposals and, as stated in the preamble of the commission’s report, “The problem is real. The solution will be painful. There is no easy way out. Everything must be on the table.”

In addition to the commission’s report, other panels have released recommendations addressing ways to reduce

federal spending and shrink the alarming size of the budget deficit. These include proposals by the Bipartisan Policy Center’s Debt Reduction Task Force, led by former Sen. Pete Domenici and Alice Rivlin, former director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office. An open letter to the American people that accompanies the panel’s report clearly states, “The federal budget is on a dangerous, unsustainable path.” If enacted, the Task Force recommendations (available at www.bipartisanpolicy.org) would impact military and retired programs and other entitlements.

So what happens to these recommendations? At this point, no action has been taken to implement them, but it’s very likely that some will be introduced as legislation in the new 112th Congress, which convenes on January 5, 2011. And some may be incorporated into the President’s 2012 Budget request that goes to Capitol Hill next month, or included in budget resolutions that will be prepared by committees in both bodies in the coming months.

The commission, also referred to as the Debt Commission, and its recommendations were referenced in a *USA Today* editorial (December 6, 2010) which, in part, read, “It was encouraging that a plan with something for everyone to hate got 11 of the commission’s 18 votes. Yes, that was short of the 14 votes it would have taken to send the plan to Congress for a vote, but it was a big majority, and it included five of the commission’s six senators, three Republicans and two Democrats.” This prompted speculation that legislation based on the panel’s work and its recommendations would most likely originate in the Senate. And only one of six House members on the panel voted in favor

of the package, that being Rep. John Spratt (S.C.) who currently chairs the House Budget Committee and lost his reelection bid last November.

Make no mistake. These recommendations have the potential to be serious threats to military and veterans’ benefits. FRA is closely tracking legislative proposals in the new 112th Congress and will immediately alert our membership about any and all legislative effort to compromise shipmates’ hard-earned pay, healthcare and other benefits. We’re also strategizing with our Military Coalition partners about the hard work that lies ahead in 2011 and beyond.

While very serious, this isn’t the first time service members, retirees and veterans’ benefits have been threatened. FRA has led many battles to secure these benefits and, thanks to strong grassroots support, we’ve been highly successful. This has been particularly true during the past decade, when our efforts have resulted significant pay and benefit enhancements for active, Reserve, retired and veterans of the Sea Services, their families and survivors. It’s especially important to stay informed and remember that weighing in with your elected officials is integral to these results. By sharing your views via the FRA Action Center at www.fra.org, you strengthen the Association’s collective voice on Capitol Hill and play a vital role in advancing FRA’s legislative work on behalf of all shipmates.

Joe Barnes is FRA’s National Executive Director and Chairman of the National Committee on Legislative Service and a member of the Special Committee on Future Strategic Planning. A member of Navy Department Branch 181, he is also an advisor to the National Committees on Budget and Finance and Membership and Retention.

Military ID Cards

I've just read Shipmate Thomas L. Martin's letter regarding his wife's new ID card. Maybe I've been asleep for the last 10 years or so, but I've never heard of a requirement for us retirees to get new ID cards. What's going on?

William H. Mattingly

FRA Response: Shipmate Martin's letter referenced getting new ID cards for spouses of military retirees, who do not get permanent ID cards until they reach age 75. The cards for this retiree spouses expire every four years and also when the spouse becomes eligible for TRICARE for Life (TFL) at age 65. When the spouse reaches age 75, she/he will be issued a card that has no expiration date.

Military retirees' ID cards are issued without an expiration date, but should also be updated at age 65 to reflect eligibility for TFL.

In the November 2010 issue of *FRA Today* a letter about "New ID Cards, No Waiting" says DD Form 1172 is needed. Is DD Form 214 no longer valid and, if so, how does a retired person get a DD Form 1172?

Clarence W. Wood

FRA Response: Your DD-214 is proof of your military service and remains a very important document that is required to prove your eligibility for veterans and military benefits.

DD Form 1172 is the application used to apply for a military ID card and enrollment in DEERS, the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System. This form can be downloaded at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd1172.pdf> and must be signed by the military sponsor. The signature must be witnessed at the ID card office or the sponsor can have his/her signature notarized in advance if he/she cannot be present when the dependent visits the ID card office.

Blue Water Claims for Agent Orange Exposure

My father served on the USS *Robinson*, a destroyer that operated in Vietnam. Is this ship's [exposure to Agent Orange] ever going to be officially listed, so he might receive benefits?

Elizabeth Schiralli

FRA Response: The listing, provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and available at www.fra.org, contains the names of vessels the VA knows to have sailed in inland

waterways, i.e. brown water, of Vietnam. The VA continues to add ships to the list as they receive documentation related to the ship's service in Vietnam.

If your dad is suffering from one of the diseases listed in sub section 3.309 of 38 Code of Federal Regulations (available at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Reference/index.htm>) and he believes he was exposed to Agent Orange, he should file a claim with the VA. Do not wait for the Robinson to appear on the VA's list; it will only further delay benefits he may have earned through his service. He should include a description of his medical problems, the names of ships on which he served in Vietnam and the dates (month and year) he was aboard. The VA has a duty to assist in verifying service for those periods, and service connection may be granted for the specific illnesses. If he needs help in filing a claim for service-connected disabilities, please feel free to contact Chris Slawinski at vafra@fra.org or 1-800-FRA-1924, ext. 115.

Reduction in VA Benefits

The VA wants to reduce my monthly disability payment by almost \$400. I served in the Marine Corps in Vietnam and I really didn't injure myself in the military; I let the enemy do that. Any thoughts would be appreciated.

Tim Holliday

FRA Response: There are many factors that could cause an increase or reduction in compensation paid for service-connected disabilities. The VA must inform you of any reduction in disability rating 60 days in advance, and you have the right to appeal such determinations before they go into effect. If you feel your benefit has been wrongly reduced, you should appeal the decision.

Any rating evaluation that continued at the same level for five years or more may not be reduced unless all the evidence of record shows sustained improvement in the disability. The VA cannot make this determination based on a single examination in which the reduction is proposed "in isolation of the rest of the record." All the evidence must support the conclusion that the disability has improved before a reduction is warranted.

If you have further questions, please contact Chris Slawinski, FRA's national veterans' service officer at vafra@fra.org or 1-800-FRA-1924, ext 115.

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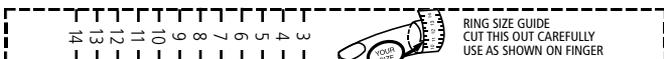
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Welcome to the 112th Congress

THE NOVEMBER 2010 ELECTIONS are resulting in significant changes in the House of Representatives when the 112th Congress convenes this month. Republicans will be the majority and leadership changes will occur in all House committees, subcommittees and caucuses. Your FRA Legislative Team is working to inform new members of Congress about the Association's legislative priorities, which have been selected based on the concerns of our members, the number of personnel affected, and the potential for legislative action during the session. In addition to these priorities, the Association continues its work to advance other legislative proposals that will benefit active duty, Reserve, retired and veteran shipmates and their families.

As this issue of *FRA Today* goes to press, the Second Session of the 111th Congress is still in session and lawmakers are working to finalize the FY2011 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The House completed work on its version (H.R. 5136) of the measure last May and the Senate hasn't begun floor action on its version (S. 3454) at press time. FRA is supporting amendments that include the Administration's proposed concurrent receipt improvements; an annual active-duty pay increase that is one-half percent above the Employment Cost Index (ECI); early retirement credit (retroactive to 9/11/01) for frequently mobilized Reservists; and repeal of the offset experienced by survivors who are eligible for both Survivor Benefit Plan and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) payments.

FRA shipmates can be proud of the following Association legislative successes in 2010, many in conjunction with our Military Coalition partners. It's also important to note that the FY2011 NDAA has not been finalized at press time.

- Delaying the drastic cuts to reimbursement rates for physicians who serve TRICARE and Medicare patients;
- Exempted TRICARE and Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) health care from national healthcare reform legislation;
- Secured full funding for the Defense Healthcare Program (DHP);
- No 2011 TRICARE fee increase for beneficiaries;
- Enacted "The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health



John Davis

- Services Act" (S. 1963) that provides caregiver support, women veterans' healthcare, rural healthcare improvements, mental healthcare and aid for homeless veterans;
- Enactment of legislation authorizing VA state veterans' homes to provide nursing-home care for parents of children who died while serving in the Armed Forces;
- Authorizing the VA to reimburse enrolled veterans for the cost of emergency treatment not covered by his/her outside health insurance;
- Enactment of the U.S. Coast Guard FY2011 Authorization; (See page 9 for more information.)
- Implementation of overseas military voting improvements during the 2010 election;
- House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) approval of legislation (H.R. 4865) that would allow active-duty Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) participants to deposit some or all of the cash value of their unused annual leave into their accounts when they retire;
- House approval of veteran status for "gray-area retirees" with 20 or more years of service (HR 3787); and
- Legislation authorizing healthcare coverage for military dependents though age 25.

FRA was also an outspoken advocate for the VA's expanded eligibility for Vietnam-era veterans suffering from B-cell (or hairy-cell) leukemia, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease. (See page 11 for more information.) These diseases are now presumed to be service-connected for personnel who served in Vietnam, and the VA also established new presumptions for nine infectious diseases (Brucellosis, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Coxiella Burnetii* or "Q fever", Malaria, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, Nontyphoid Salmonella, Shigella, Visceral leishmaniasis and West Nile virus) associated with service in Southwest Asia (including Iraq) or Afghanistan. FRA remains committed to further expanding service-connected presumptions to include Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard veterans who served off the coast of Vietnam between 1962 and 1975. Many of these so-called "blue water" veterans were exposed to Agent Orange and suffer related illnesses, but are denied VA disability benefits because they did not have "boots on the ground" or serve in Vietnam's inland waterways.

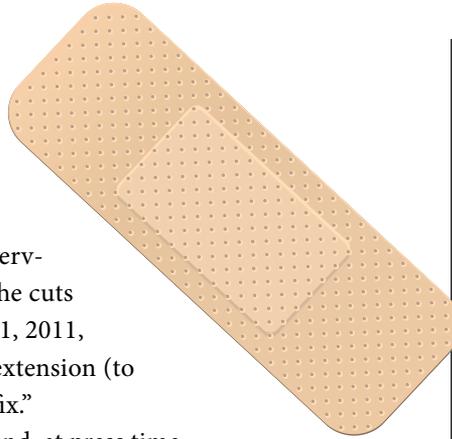
Another Temporary Doc Fix

Shortly after its Thanksgiving recess, Congress and the White House acted quickly to pass legislation that again delays a drastic 23-percent reimbursement rate cut for physicians serving Medicare and TRICARE patients. The cuts were set to be implemented on January 1, 2011, but the new law authorized a one-year extension (to January 1, 2012) for the so-called “doc fix.”

This was the fifth extension in 2010 and, at press time, it's doubtful a permanent solution will be reached before the 111th Congress adjourns. Senators Max Baucus (Mont.) and Charles Grassley (Iowa), chairman and ranking member (respectively) of the Senate Finance Committee, announced they are working on a year-long extension agreement that would delay the cuts until late 2011.

FRA continues to press for a long-term, permanent solution that provides doctors with adequate reimbursement levels in conjunction with caring for Medicare and TRICARE patients.

Hot Topic: If reimbursement rates are cut, how will that affect your access to quality health care? Visit www.fra.org/hottopics to share your views.



Coast Guard Authorization Act Passes

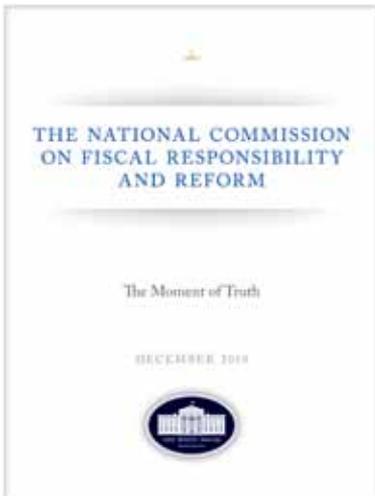
President Obama signed the FY2011 Coast Guard Authorization Act (Public Law No: 111-281) in mid-October that addresses several important personnel-related issues. The law includes provisions that allow the retention of leave for Coast Guard personnel who provide support for major disasters if they would otherwise be required to forfeit it; legal assistance for qualified Coast Guard Reservists on a par with all similarly situated DoD Reservists; and reimbursement for certain medical-related travel expenses when a service member is stationed on an INCONUS island and his/her family member is referred to a specialty care provider off-island. The law also authorizes USCG end strength of 47,000 for FY2011 and makes Coast Guard retirees eligible for the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH). The bill also changes the vice commandant position from a 3-star to a 4-star billet, which will align the Coast Guard's structure more closely with the other armed forces.

Debt Commission Votes on Final Report

The President's 18-member Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform voted on the panel's final report recommendations in early December, with 11 members voting in favor of the package of cost-saving proposals. The report recommends cutting \$3.9 trillion from domestic and Defense spending over 10 years and has created a national dialogue on the need to reduce spending. (Read Joe Barnes' *NED Perspective* column on page 5 for more information.)

In related news, a separate Debt Reduction Task Force also issued its final report with cost-cutting recommendations. The task force members are former legislators who propose drastic changes to various programs, including higher TRICARE fees and pharmacy co-pays; delaying military retirement pay until age 57; and changing the cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) calculations.

Both panels' recommendations will be closely scrutinized by Congress and FRA's Legislative Team in the coming year. If any of these recommendations are introduced as legislation, FRA will advise shipmates to communicate their views to their elected officials via The Action Center at www.fra.org.



FVAP Briefs TMC

FRA recently hosted a briefing from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) for members of The Military Coalition (TMC) to discuss progress being made to assist overseas military voters. As a result of legislation that streamlines the absentee voting process for overseas voters, far more ballots were sent out 45 days before the 2010 elections and 31 states now have online delivery of ballots to overseas service members as compared to only eight in 2008. FVAP is also working with the Uniform Law Commission to create model state legislation to make it more convenient for overseas voters to vote in their state of residency. FRA is continuing its work with FVAP to monitor recently enacted absentee voting regulations, improve voter participation in federal elections and expedite military mail processing of overseas ballots.



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VETERANS ISSUES

Payments Begin for Agent Orange Presumptions

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) began distributing disability benefits to Vietnam veterans who qualify for compensation under a recent ruling related to Agent Orange exposure. Up to 200,000 Vietnam veterans are potentially eligible to receive benefits for B-cell (or hairy-cell) leukemia, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease thanks to the ruling. Approximately 1,300 claims have been paid, but it may be some time before all eligible beneficiaries receive payment.

For more information, read Tom Philpott's syndicated *Military Update* column (11-4-10) at www.fra.org/news. Scroll down to the *Military Update* heading and click "View all" to read this and other archived columns.

VA Promotes Hotline to Help Vets, Loved Ones

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has started a suicide prevention campaign that includes more than 1,200 advertisements promoting the VA's suicide hotline. According to VA sources, the VA Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-8255 (TALK), has saved more than 10,000 veterans and provided counseling for more than 180,000 veterans and their loved ones since its inception in July 2007. The hotline is staffed 24/7 by trained mental health professionals and offers an anonymous online chat feature at www.suicidepreventionhotline.org.

New Medical Forms Streamline Veterans Claims Process

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has released three new disability benefits questionnaires for physicians examining veterans who are applying for VA disability compensation and benefits. This initiative marks the beginning of a major reform to streamline the claims process for injured or ill veterans. These new questionnaires are the first of 79 disability benefits surveys that will guide veterans' personal and VA physicians in the evaluation of the most frequent medical conditions affecting veterans.

The VA is also directly involving veterans' treating physicians to provide specific information needed to evaluate their claims. The goal is to accurately process all claims in fewer than 125 days, a benchmark Secretary Shinseki has mandated by 2015. The physician questionnaire project is one of more than three dozen initiatives actively underway at VA, including a major technology modernization that will lead to paperless claims processing. For veterans who receive their care from private physicians, the VA has placed the disability benefits questionnaires online (at <http://www.vba.va.gov/disabilityexams>) with instructions for physicians to submit examination results on veterans' behalf.

Portal Helps Vets, Reservists, Find Employment

A Department of Defense (DoD) state-of-the-art web portal (<http://www.EmployerPartnership.org>) was recently initiated to help veterans, as well as Reserve component members, their families, and wounded warriors, obtain employment with civilian employers who value their military experience. The user-friendly Web site will try to improve the popular Employer Partnership of the Armed Forces program by making it easier for both job-hunters and employers seeking their skills. The program simplifies the job application process by allowing users to set up a personal profile and maintain a record of their job searches and search parameters. That means users don't have to start from square one each time they enter the system, saving them time and inconvenience. In addition, a resume builder helps users create a resume and maintain it in the system, and they can even set an alert function that notifies them when particular job announcements are posted. The new portal will be easier for about 1,200 employers participating in the partnership program, too. They will now be able to enter employment vacancies directly into the system and track applications. In addition, they will be able to tap into resumes already in the system and reach out directly to candidates who qualify for open positions.

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RETIREES ISSUES

DFAS Briefing on Retiree Benefits

FRA recently hosted a briefing by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) for members of The Military Coalition (TMC). Jeffrey Z. Johnson, the newly appointed DFAS director for Retired and Annuitant Pay, explained that many of the DFAS services that were previously outsourced are now being brought in-house to better serve DFAS customers. In addition to drastically reducing the backlog of late payments (by more than 90 percent since February 2010), Johnson's goals include improving customer service when retirees contact DFAS with a question or concern; communicating through Facebook, e-mails and other electronic methods; and eliminating Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)/DFAS errors with an electronic portal that allows the daily exchange of information between the two agencies.

Flu Shots Available for TFL Beneficiaries

TRICARE for Life (TFL) beneficiaries have numerous choices for protection during the fall and winter flu season. Influenza vaccines are covered by Medicare at no cost to TFL beneficiaries as long as they are administered by a Medicare provider who agrees to accept the Medicare-approved amount as full payment.

Flu shots are also covered by TRICARE if obtained at participating TRICARE network pharmacies in the U.S. Beneficiaries should call ahead to their pharmacy to determine if it participates in the TRICARE program and has vaccine available. To find a participating pharmacy, go to www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE or call Express Scripts at 1-877-363-1303.

Many military clinics or hospitals also offer flu shots to military retirees (including those who participate in TRICARE Prime), often in conjunction with military retiree appreciation days. Other options may include local health departments and Veterans Administration medical centers. Always check ahead for availability before making the trip.

TFL beneficiaries who live in U.S. territories overseas may access either Medicare providers or TRICARE retail pharmacies to get an influenza vaccination within the territory. Medicare will not pay for care outside the U.S. and its territories. Those who live overseas outside of U.S. territories should make an appointment with a local provider. Beneficiaries may have to pay the provider at the time of service and file a claim for the office visit. In the Philippines, TFL beneficiaries must see a certified provider. A certified provider list is available at www.tricare.mil/tma/pacific/pacificCertifiedProviders.aspx.

Visit TRICARE's flu page (<http://www.tricare.mil/flu/>) for more information about seasonal vaccines.

No One-Time Payment In Lieu of COLA

Despite legislative efforts in the House (H.R. 5987) and Senate (S. 3957) to provide a one-time payment for Social Security recipients, disabled veterans and other federal beneficiaries, the measures died at the end of the 111th Congress. The \$250 payments were proposed in response to the second consecutive year without cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) for these beneficiaries.

CRDP/CRSC Open Season in January

Retired service members who are eligible for both Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) and Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) can select which payment they prefer to receive during the CRDP/CRSC open season that runs for the entire month of January, 2011. According to federal law, retirees can receive either CRDP or CRSC, but not both.

All eligible retirees should have received a CRDP/CRSC Open Season Election Form in the mail, which includes a comparison of the CRDP and CRSC entitlement amounts and information about tax implications. Retirees should return the form *only* if they wish to make a change from CRDP to CRSC or vice versa. If a retiree prefers to keep things the way they are, no action is needed and the current payment will continue uninterrupted. Forms must be postmarked no later than January 31, 2011, for the changes to be implemented.

Typical processing time is 30 days and most changes will take effect on the first business day of February 2011. All elections remain in effect unless changed in a subsequent annual open season. For additional information, visit www.dfas.mil.

The FRA Legislative team is Joe Barnes, National Executive Director; John Davis, Director of Legislative Programs and Branch 181 President; Bob Washington, Health Care Advisor and Outreach Manager; Chris Slawinski, National Veterans Service Officer and Ed Dockery, Assistant Director of Legislative Programs.



The FRA Education Foundation — ensuring education opportunities for our worthy military personnel and their families.

Our Roots

FRA's scholarship program has also been helping deserving students reach their educational and professional goals for decades, presenting annual awards of up to \$5,000 to deserving students who are pursuing college degrees. Thanks to the generosity of our members, legacy gifts and corporate sponsors, the scope of the program has grown substantially since 2000; increasing the number of recipients by more than 50 percent and boosting the monetary value of the awards by more than 260 percent. Just since 2000, the FRA scholarship program has provided over 200 scholarships totaling more than \$850,000.

We recognize more is needed to ensure that our Nation's military and their families are afforded an education that will benefit their future — and that of our country. The Foundation is an important step in growing this scholarship program, and we are inviting you to be a "plank owner" in this newly founded 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization by contributing within the Foundation's first year.

Please consider supporting the FRA Education Foundation as it assists our military personnel and their families by making a donation today. Please cut out the donation slip below and mail it to:

FRA Education Foundation
125 N. West St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

or visit www.fra.org/support to donate online.

The FRA Education Foundation will allow us to expand and assist even more scholars through the development of more and larger scholarships, as well as other educational programs. Together, we can ensure education opportunities for our worthy military personnel and their families.

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FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION UNIFORM DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

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New York: Upon request, a copy of Fleet Reserve Association's last annual report filed with the Attorney General is available from Fleet Reserve Association or from the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau, Attn: FOIL Officer, Department of State, 120 Broadway, New York, New York 10271. North Carolina: Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at (888) 830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the state.

Shipmate Rosenberg's Legacy

EACH YEAR FRA PRESENTS the prestigious Abraham M. Rosenberg Membership Award to the branch that most effectively demonstrates outstanding membership promotion. The award is named after Shipmate Abe Rosenberg, who was active in Branch 17, chaired the Bulletin and Resolutions Committees, and served as vice-president of the Association's Mid-West Region before becoming FRA's national president in 1934–1935. His contributions to the Association had long-reaching effects and — through a series of e-mails from Abraham's son and grandson — we've recently learned how his military service and involvement in FRA also touched several generations of the Rosenberg family.

Abraham "Abe" Rosenberg joined the Navy at age 15 as a 3rd Class Seaman Apprentice in 1904. He served his apprenticeship aboard the USS *Constellation* and did his first major shipboard cruise as a topsail yardsman on the USS *Hartford*, a three-masted barque that had been Admiral Farragut's flagship during the Civil War. Abe became a master diver and made chief around 1911, serving as one of the Navy's youngest chief petty officers at that time. In World War I, he was commissioned and witnessed the scuttling of the German fleet at Scapa Flow. He reverted to chief in 1940 and left the Navy, only to be recalled to service for WWII. He finally retired as a lieutenant commander in 1946.

Abe became an FRA shipmate in the early days of the Association and is referenced as an attendee at the Association's fourth national convention in 1927. His son, Richard, fondly recalls his father's active involvement with Cleveland Branch 17. "We

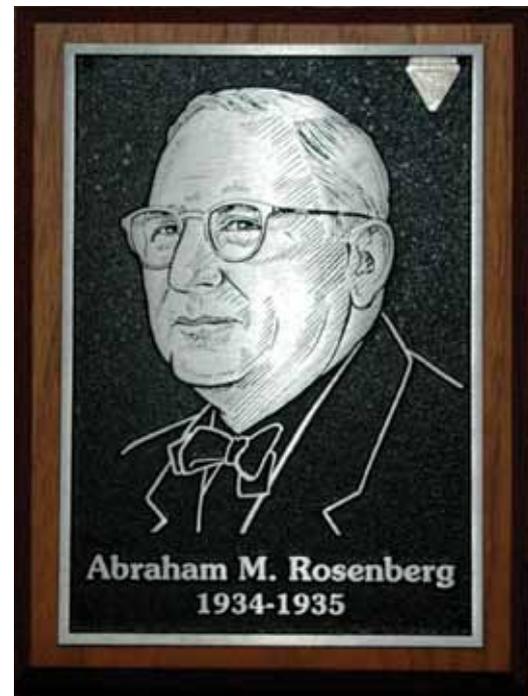
attended many fish fries, picnics and other functions such as Decoration Day and the 4th of July. To this day, I remember vividly the names of some of the members we got to know."

Richard also attended several national conventions with his parents and came to know a number of FRA's leading members, including fourth National Executive Secretary Charles Lofgren, who served in that capacity from 1934 to 1957.

"Did you know that Charlie was a member of Admiral Byrd's South Pole expedition? When he returned, he did a cross-country speaking tour accompanied by a Husky named Tommy Pratt," Richard recalls. "When [Lofgren] spoke in Cleveland, he stayed with us and Tommy Pratt took me for a walk."

Richard followed in his father's military footsteps, also serving in the Navy during World War II as a communications officer aboard the USS *Harding* (DD-625). "In addition to the North Atlantic convoy and hunter-killer operations, we also provided close fire support during the Normandy landings and later were involved in surface combat against German vessels in the Med during the Southern France invasion. We were converted to a high-speed destroyer/minesweeper and took part in the Okinawa operations in the Pacific where we were 'damaged beyond repair' in a kamikaze attack."

Richard, who is now 89 years old, stills considers himself "All Navy"



and is justifiably proud of his family's military service. "My late son, Jon, was wounded in a tank at the Suez Canal during Israel's Yom Kippur War and his son Gabriel — Abraham's great-grandson — was a 3rd class electronics technician aboard an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf"

Shipmate Abe's grandson, Dan, appreciates FRA's efforts to honor his grandfather, who was physically and mentally active until his death in 1982 at the age of 93. "I am extremely proud of my grandfather and grateful that he continues to be honored and remembered by the FRA."

More than 60 branches have received the Abraham M. Rosenberg Membership Award since its inception in 1949. Each recipient adds a page to the rich legacy left by Shipmate Abe, who continues to inspire his shipmates and his descendants.

Valuable Membership for Valued Members

AT A RECENT MEETING convened by National Executive Director Joe Barnes, members of FRA National Headquarters' staff discussed ways to ensure shipmates renew and retain their membership in FRA. Retention is a key factor in growing and sustaining a strong membership base, and the discussion highlighted some of the ways shipmates, branches and staff can help members realize the full benefit of their affiliation with FRA.

An overarching theme of the meeting was value — the valuable benefits of FRA membership, as well as making sure shipmates know they are valued and appreciated. By learning what motivated a shipmate to join the association and what their expectations of membership are, we can work to ensure those expectations are met. Below are some of the ideas that came from the meeting:

- Examine branches that have successful recruiting and retention programs to develop best practices.
- Expand the Life Membership base.
- Share compelling legislative concerns FRA is addressing on behalf of our members.
- Expand local outreach activities for branch participation.
- Welcome new members with a phone call and offer to accompany them to a branch meeting.
- Develop a mentoring program at the branch level to keep members engaged and cultivate leadership skills and opportunities.
- Contact shipmates whose memberships are about to expire through a call program or via written communication.
- Include guest speakers, social activities or programs of interest at branch meetings. This not only makes the meetings more fun for

current members, it provides an opportunity to welcome prospective members, their families and other guests. Advise members in advance of meeting times, dates and scheduled activities.

- Use broadcast e-mails to quickly and cost-effectively share important information with shipmates.

Promote member participation in FRA's online Communities, Facebook, and Twitter.

- Encourage shipmates to subscribe to *NewsBytes*, FRA's free weekly e-mail update. *NewsBytes* subscribers are significantly more likely to retain their membership. (To subscribe, e-mail newsbytes@fra.org with "Subscribe" in the subject line and your name, address and member number in the body.)
- Consider getting involved in community relations activities. Many successful branches sponsor scout troops or Sea Cadet programs; volunteer in programs such as Navy Safe Harbor and the Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service (VAVS); collect donations for Toys 4 Tots or care packages for the troops; or support recognition of outstanding service members in their local area. Many of these are natural extensions of the work being done by branch committees.
- Promote member participation in FRA's online Communities, Facebook, and Twitter. These are communications vehicles that are particularly effective in reaching



Penny Collins

active duty and Reserve members and prospects.

- Is there a VA clinic or military hospital in your area? Help expand distribution of *FRA Today* by taking extra copies to locations where prospective members can see them.
- Contact widows/widowers whose shipmate was affiliated with your branch. In addition to being supportive during their time of need, consider extending the surviving spouse's subscription to *FRA Today*. Widow subscriptions are only \$7 per year and many branches provide this to widows and widowers.
- Partner with Auxiliary units to strengthen recruiting and retention programs.

These are just a few ways that branches, shipmates and staff can help current and prospective members understand the value of being an FRA member. Please share ways you or your branch are demonstrating the worth of FRA involvement by e-mailing me at penny@fra.org or calling me at 1-800-FRA-1924, ext. 123.

Penny Collins is FRA's Director of Membership Development and a member of FRA Branch 24 in Annapolis, Md. She can be reached at penny@fra.org.

Changes to Monthly Membership Newsletter

Branches should look for changes to FRA's Monthly Membership Newsletter, which will no longer include national membership statistics. Beginning this month, the newsletter (a.k.a. *The Juicy News*) will be transmitted as part of the electronic weekly mail and will also be available online at www.fra.org under the Area for Branch and Regional Officers. Branches will continue to receive their monthly membership reports by mail.

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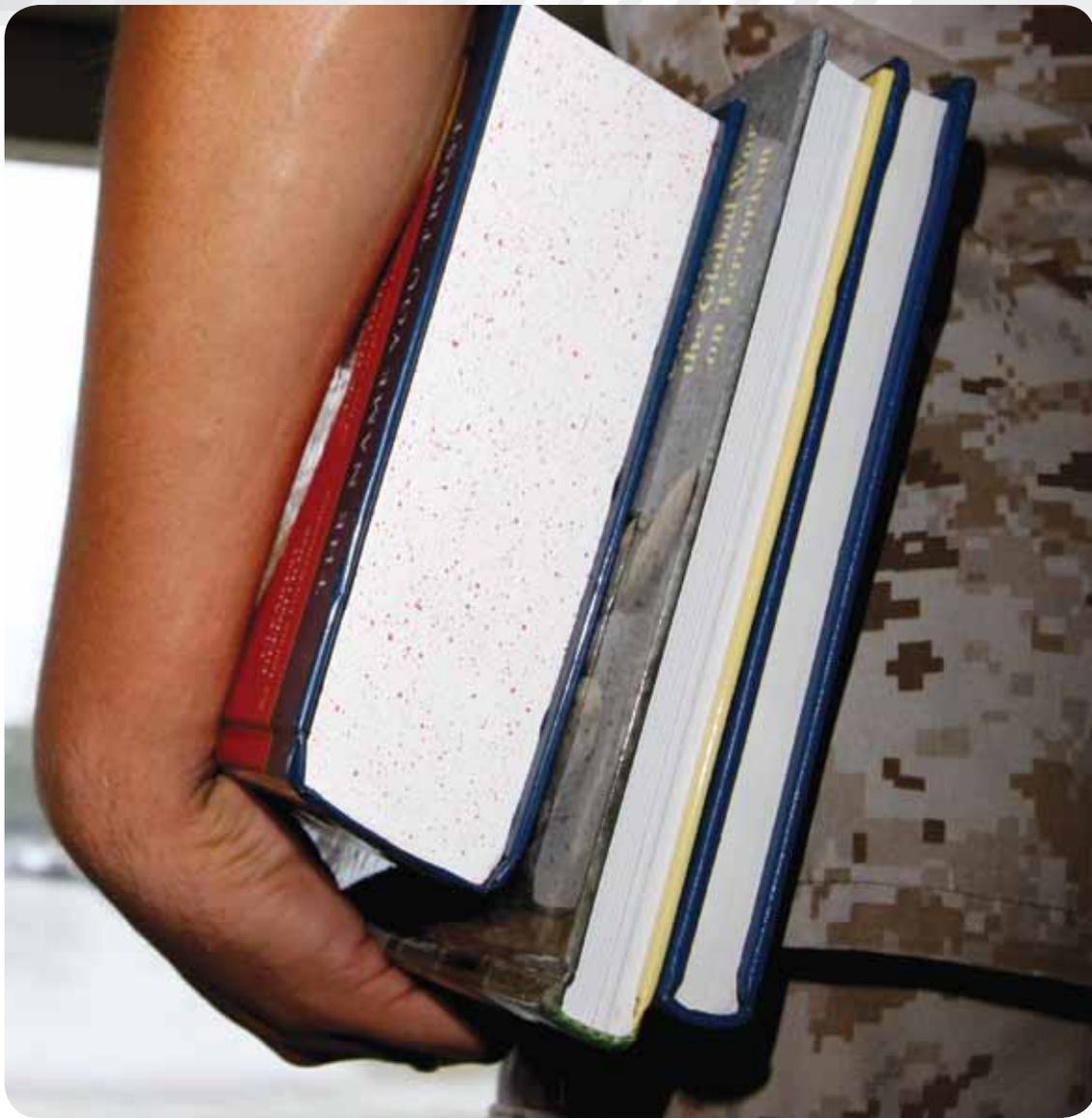


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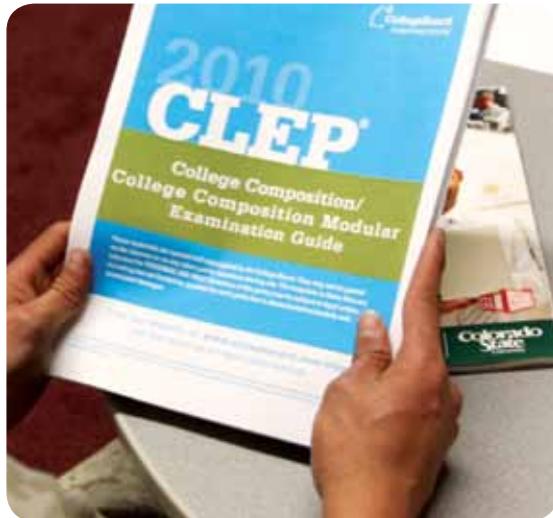
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Dis



Distance Learning

Achieving Academic and Professional Success Online

Many service members, retirees, veterans and family members are achieving academic and professional success through online education programs. These so-called "distance learners" are discovering the advantages of pursuing an academic degree via the Internet, joining the more than 4.6 million college and graduate school students who are engaged in online courses.

According to Sloan-C, a consortium of schools and organizations committed to quality online education, enrollment in online college programs is growing faster than overall higher education enrollment. Online enrollments rose 17 percent in 2009 while overall college enrollment only rose by 1.2 percent. The trend doesn't seem to be slowing down ... and for good reason.

By Lauren Armstrong



Technology Allows Flexibility

Pursuing a college degree is a challenging proposition, but it gets even more complicated when trying to wedge it in with family and professional demands. Whether you're a military member who is frequently deployed, a veteran with a demanding civilian work schedule, a retiree for whom transportation is a problem or a stay-at-home parent who must coordinate childcare and after-school activities, it can be difficult to attend classes on a rigid schedule.

Online programs offer a level of flexibility that simply can't be found in a traditional brick-and-mortar classroom. Nearly half (49.47 percent) of participants in a recent FRA survey chose an online learning opportunity because of the flexibility it offers. Survey participants cited the advantages of being able to access the programs 24/7 from virtually anywhere in the world. Convenient schedules; avoiding transportation, parking and babysitting costs and hassles; and the ability to work at their own pace were also consistently referenced as advantages of distance learning.

When Uncle Sam, a civilian employer or personal circumstances require a college student to relocate, it may be difficult for a traditional undergraduate or graduate student to transfer credits to another school

at their new location and they often lose course credits in the process. Some may even be forced to start over from scratch if their previous coursework isn't accepted by the new college or university. Because every location with Internet access becomes a virtual classroom, pursuing an online degree allows students to attend the same school throughout their entire degree program, regardless of where they move. One survey respondent summed it up well: "Start anywhere, finish anywhere. Helpful when PCSing."

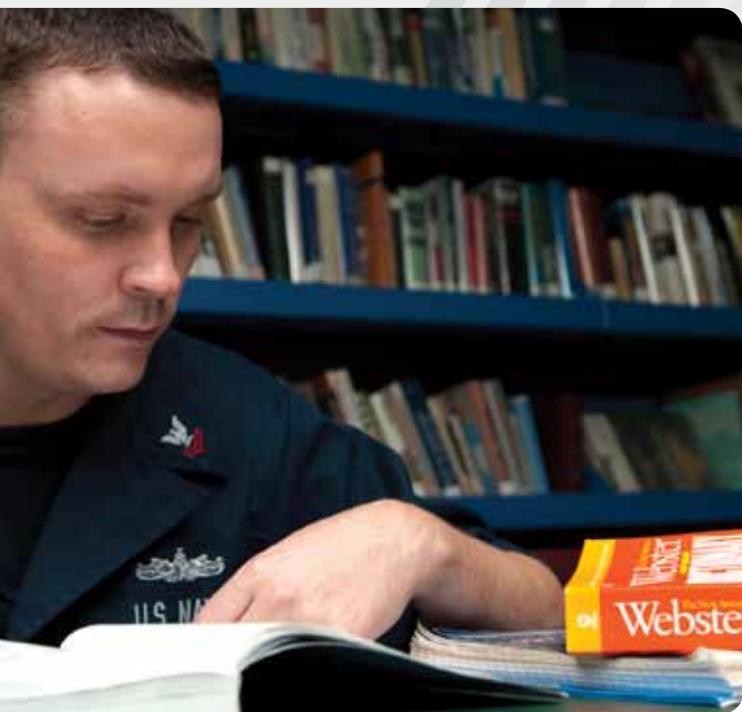
Tammy Duckworth, an Iraq War veteran who now serves as assistant secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), found online flexibility to be the key to finishing her doctorate degree. She'd finished all her course work, completed her comprehensive exams and was working on her dissertation at a traditional university while she was commanding a Black Hawk helicopter unit as a member of the Illinois National Guard. After 9/11, her focus shifted to her military responsibilities and she knew she wouldn't be able to complete her degree at a school that required her to be on campus. She enrolled in Capella, an online university that specializes in graduate and post-graduate degrees.

She put her education on hold when she deployed in late 2003, but in 2004, her plans took another unplanned turn. During a mission over Baghdad, she lost both her legs and partial use of one arm when a rocket-propelled grenade hit her helicopter. "I was so severely wounded that I just was not able to meet the [educational]

"People know about my military background, they know about my managerial skills, but to get to that next level, I feel that I would be a more competitive candidate if I had the doctorate, and so that is why I have decided to come back to school."

Tammy Duckworth





commitments. [When] I got this job, I said, some day maybe when I retire and I am in my sixties, I will go back to school and get that doctorate," Duckworth explains in an interview with Capella. "I am at a point of my life now where I want to move forward in my career. I have a presidential appointment, I am an assistant secretary of a major department of the United States government, and I would like to be someday a deputy or a cabinet secretary, but I need to have some of those credentials to show that I can do those things. People know about my military background, they know about my managerial skills, but to get to that next level, I feel that I would be a more competitive candidate if I had the doctorate, and so that is why I have decided to come back to school."

Myths About Online Education

Some believe that an online degree is less valuable than one earned at a brick-and-mortar college or university. Others think that going to college online is an easier and/or less expensive path to a college degree. Think again.

Online degrees are gaining credibility thanks, in part, to the fact that most state and private universities, including prestigious schools like Harvard and Johns Hopkins Universities, are now offering entire degree programs online. And virtually all colleges and universities are now

augmenting their on-campus curricula with a wide variety of online courses that include academic requirements identical to their traditional classroom courses. These courses may even be taught by the same instructors who teach on-campus. The technology that allows students to learn from anywhere also allows highly-qualified professors and industry experts to teach from anywhere.

The notion that online degrees are easier to obtain or are less expensive to pursue just doesn't ring true. Nearly 72 percent of respondents to FRA's recent survey agreed the quality of their online education was comparable to that provided at a traditional brick-and-mortar institution; more than 17 percent believe they are receiving a better education via the Internet. And many survey participants cited high costs as one of the many challenges they faced in pursuing an online degree.

Changes to Post-9/11 GI Bill May Help Online Students

The generous education benefit that took effect in August 2009 could get even better if Congress approves legislation that would authorize a living allowance for military online learners who take enough courses to qualify as half-time students. The measure (S. 3447) also seeks to enhance the tuition benefit, make the program more accessible to eligible National Guard members and simplify the payment formula.

As this issue of *FRA Today* goes to print, the 111th Congress is unlikely to take action on these proposals before it adjourns. Media reports indicate, however, there's a good chance for similar legislation to be approved in the 112th Congress that begins this month. Funding for these Post-9/11 GI Bill improvements might require some revisions to or elimination of the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB), though specifics aren't yet available. FRA will monitor the proposed changes and keep shipmates advised in future issues of *FRA Today* and *NewsBytes*, FRA's free weekly e-mail update. (To subscribe, please e-mail newsbytes@fra.org with "Subscribe" in the subject line and your name and address in the body.)

How It Works

Most online programs are asynchronous, meaning students can access course materials, online lectures and discussion forums, 24 hours a day from any location that offers Internet access. Others may include synchronous instruction, which means students log in at a designated time for live presentations and real-time discussions. Professors and fellow students are generally accessible via e-mail, chat functions and web seminars, allowing learners to participate in a virtual classroom community. Homework is assigned and submitted digitally.

Some schools, such as Columbia Southern University (CSU), allow students to start their courses at any time. "CSU offers two types of enrollment," explains Jessica

McBride, who is responsible for CSU's marketing and communications efforts. "In addition to traditional term enrollment, which provides several specific start dates throughout the year, we also offer open, or per-course, enrollment that allows our students to begin a course whenever they're ready. They don't have to wait for a term to begin, which is a big plus for our military students."

Although some online learners feel disconnected from their professors and peers (see *Is Online Education for You?* on page 25), others find they are able to develop a real sense of community and classroom camaraderie with their fellow students. Like in a traditional classroom, many online-learning assignments are group projects that require students to work cooperatively via conference calls or online group meetings. These functions might include webcam connections (so you can see and talk "face-to-face" with an instructor or fellow students) and the use of Internet tools that allows several students to digitally work on a document or presentation at the same time.

Gaining knowledge of multimedia software and other technologies (i.e. Wikis, file-sharing and chat functions, discussion forums) is an additional part of the online learning experience. According to one respondent in FRA's survey, "Navigating an online course [helps me] stay current with technology and learning methods." The ability to agilely use such tools can be a valuable asset both in and out of the classroom, including military and civilian workplaces.

In addition to completing required online courses, some programs may also require students to complete additional in-person assignments. Education majors, for example, are usually required to complete a student-teaching module in order to earn their degree. If the program you choose has such a requirement, school faculty, staff and advisors will help arrange these face-to-face assignments in a location that is geographically convenient for you.

When Transferring Credit is Necessary

Distance learners sometimes have the opportunity or need to take classes at an institution other than the school at which they are pursuing a degree. The ability to transfer credits from one school to another can be important, particularly for military personnel. The Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) consortium is a network of schools that have agreed to accept one another's courses in a particular program of study. Students select a home college, where they must complete at least six semester hours before they can enter into a SOC agreement. If they are transferred to another duty station, they can take courses at other SOC colleges – either in a traditional classroom setting or via distance learning programs – and have the credits transferred to their home college and applied to their degree requirements. This network is designed for those currently serving in the military, but the consortium's guide can also be a valuable resource for retirees and veterans because it includes points of contact for veteran representatives at individual schools. Visit www.soc.aascu.org to learn more about the SOCNAV and SOCCOAST programs for Navy/Marine Corps and Coast Guard members, respectively.

Finding the Right School

Like traditional colleges and universities, online degree programs vary greatly, so do your homework before you enroll. Be wary of diploma mills — schools that essentially sell degrees without requiring the necessary coursework to make them legitimate. Some schools will claim to be "nationally accredited," but it's important to look for

a college or university that's endorsed by a reputable accrediting agency. In the United States, the Council for Higher Education is the agency that oversees legitimate accrediting agencies and maintains a directory of accredited colleges and universities at www.chea.org.

It's also helpful to look for programs that allow you to receive maximum credit for your military and professional experience, as well as any previous college coursework you may have completed at another institution. It's also a good idea to ask how the credits you earn might be accepted at other schools if you should need to transfer for any reason.

In order to facilitate easy comparisons, a group of distance-learning institutions are working together to offer prospective students a way to compare the various programs offered at each school. The College Choices for Adults Web site (www.collegechoicesforadults.org) allows users to explore the offerings of 17 institutions in order to make an informed choice about the higher-education program that is best for them.

Military-Friendly Institutions

Many online colleges and universities, as well as traditional degree programs, tout themselves as "military friendly." In general, this means they offer specific benefits to military students, including credit for documented military training and previous college courses, up to specified limits.

"Columbia Southern University uses SMARTS [Sailor/Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcripts] and Coast Guard transcripts to determine which military training programs have been evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE) and may be transferred," explains McBride. "We also consider training certificates and prior college credits for transfer, and will accept up to 75 percent of undergraduate courses and 50 percent of graduate courses for transfer."

Many online schools, like CSU and Capella University (both recognized by *Military Advanced Education* magazine to be among the top 20 military-friendly *continued on page 25*

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continued from page 23 colleges and universities in the country), waive application fees for military personnel and offer discounted tuition to service members. For example, CSU waives the \$25 application fee for service members and their family members and offers a 10-percent discount to military families. Capella offers discounts of up to 15 percent for military students. Both schools have partnerships with FRA that may provide additional savings for students who are FRA members or family of FRA members. Visit www.capella.edu/fra and www.columbiasouthern.edu/Partners/LearningPartners/Fleet to learn more.

Is Online Education for You?

Distance learning has a lot of advantages, but it's not for everyone. Although many students enjoy the flexibility of online learning, others struggle without the structure of a traditional classroom and find it difficult to focus when studying at home or other location where there are competing demands for their attention. While some courses allow students to work at their own pace, there are almost always assignment deadlines. It's easy for online students to underestimate the time commitment required and the need to set priorities, so just like students who attend brick-and-mortar colleges, time management is critical. A strong independent work ethic is particularly helpful for online learners.



Some participants in FRA's survey were frustrated by the lack of face-to-face interaction with instructors and fellow students, and disliked the waiting time it sometimes takes to get timely feedback from classmates and professors. Others cited the lack of campus facilities and atmosphere as a challenge. Logistics were also cited as a problem by those who don't have consistent Internet connectivity or live in a time zone that makes it difficult to participate in scheduled teleconferences or class meetings.

But many online students believe the advantages far outweigh the drawbacks. The flexibility to complete an academic degree program while meeting stringent occupational and family demands, particularly in the military lifestyle, was the most common benefit cited by survey participants. Attending classes online eliminates traffic and parking headaches and allows students to save money on gas and childcare. One survey respondent also highlighted the "greater learning potential created by the cultural and geographic diversity of peers" provided in an online education setting.

A college degree can help boost earning potential, accelerate career advancement and provide personal fulfillment. Distance learners can benefit both personally and professionally from the wealth of online educational opportunities available today.

FRA Education Foundation

There are a number of financial aid options for military learners, including Tuition Assistance, the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post 9-11 GI Bill. But if your college expenses exceed the education benefits you've earned through military service, be sure to consider the scholarships available through the FRA Education Foundation. The Foundation awarded \$118,000 last year to deserving students who are pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees and is on track to provide even more assistance in 2011. Visit www.fra.org/foundation to learn more.



Lauren Armstrong is the Contributing Editor and an LA FRA Member at Large. She can be reached at lauren@fra.org.

The *Chuting Stars* – the U.S. Navy Parachute Exhibition Team

In October 2008, *FRA Today* ran a feature story about the Navy's demonstration parachute team, the *Leap Frogs*. Shipmates Ray Wilson and Ed Kruse asked us to share the story of the *Chuting Stars*, the Navy's earlier jump team. With pleasure, shipmates!

AS THE NAVY PREPARED to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Naval Aviation in 1961, officials looked for ways to showcase the Navy's aerial strength and versatility. The service's flight demonstration team, the *Blue Angels*, would have a fuller schedule than normal that year, traveling around the country with its daring displays of aerial skill and showing what Navy airpower could do. Leadership came upon the idea of adding a parachute team, similar to the Army's *Golden Knights*, that would appear with the *Blue Angels* and also as a stand-alone demonstration of Naval expertise and ability.

The Naval Test Parachute Unit at NAF El Centro, Calif., was tasked with developing an exhibition parachute team, which consisted of several of the Navy's most experienced jumpers. Men who had logged thousands of simulated emergency jumps while analyzing the capability of aviation survival equipment were now trained to be exhibition jumpers. This new group was named the *Chuting Stars* and, by 1961, the team was traveling around the country, wowing crowds from coast to coast.

Exhibition parachute jumps at that time were very different from those seen at today's air shows. While today's jumpers maneuver rectangular canopies as the highlight



1961–1964: The *Chuting Stars*

Front (l to r) LT Tom Ericson, LCDR Bruce Cobb and LT Herman Bischoff
Back (l to r) PR2 T. Rick, PRC E. Kruse, LTJG Frank Pelkey, ADR2 T. Kelley, ADR1 W. Prout, PR1 A. Schmiz, PR3 D. Cox, PH2 D. Maury and PR2 R. Diebold.

of the demonstration, the *Chuting Stars*' feats were conducted during the free-fall portion of their jumps. They would exit the aircraft at 12,500 feet and perform choreographed maneuvers while free-falling through 10,000 feet in a heart-stopping minute, often criss-crossing paths with fellow jumpers, firing (and reloading and firing again) hand-held flare guns with smoke-billowing canisters attached to their boots. They would release their round parachutes at 2,500 feet and perform stand-up landings close to the crowd line — a difficult feat that never failed to please the audience.

Although the *Chuting Stars* were intended to be a temporary entity, the Navy quickly realized the recruiting benefits of the team and made it a permanent unit. Its headquarters was moved to NAS Pensacola, Fla., and the team grew to include administrative and public affairs staff to maximize the team's exposure and impact. Team members appeared on national television (on "What's My Line" and "To Tell the Truth") and also in a 30-minute promotional film for the Navy.

The *Chuting Stars* was disbanded for budgetary reasons in 1964, but was reauthorized in the late 1960s at NAS Lakehurst, N.J. This time, team members served on a collateral-duty basis, training and performing on the weekends in addition to serving as instructors and mechanics during normal work hours. They formed an exhibition team that thrilled audiences at air shows and a competition unit that dominated at parachuting contests.

The last official *Chuting Stars* team was disbanded in 1972, but its remaining members are rightfully proud of their accomplishments. Plans are underway for a 50th Anniversary Team Reunion to coincide with one of the events during this year's celebration of the Centennial of Naval Aviation, where recognition will be given to these true pioneers of Navy parachuting.

by Ed Kruse and Lauren Armstrong



1963 – *Chuting Stars* member PRC Ed Kruse zooming in on camera after firing a hand-held flare gun, 1963.



1962 – A *Chuting Star* over NAS Pensacola, Fla.

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Remembering USCGC *Blackthorn*

ON JANUARY 28TH OF each year, a solemn group gathers on the shores of Tampa Bay to remember the crew of the USCGC *Blackthorn* (WLB-391), nearly half of whom were lost in a tragic accident in 1980.

The 180-foot, sea-going buoy tender began her Coast Guard career in 1944 as an ice-breaker in the Great Lakes. After only a few months, *Blackthorn* was transferred to San Pedro, Calif., where she serviced aids to navigation until December of 1949. She was then reassigned to Mobile, Ala., where, in addition to her buoy tender duties, she provided search, rescue and recovery support for numerous vessels in distress. In 1976, she was transferred to Galveston, Texas. On October 15, 1979, *Blackthorn* arrived in Tampa, Fla., where she would undergo a significant overhaul.

Following the shipboard renovations and improvements, *Blackthorn* was conducting sea trials on the night of January 28, 1980, when tragedy struck. As she was leaving Tampa Bay, *Blackthorn* was overtaken by a cruise ship and had maneuvered into the center of the channel to allow the passenger vessel to pass. The bright lights of the cruise ship made it difficult to see the civilian tanker *Capricorn* in her path, until it was too late to avoid collision.

According to the Coast Guard's history website (<http://www.uscg.mil/history/webcutters/Blackthorn1944.asp>), *Blackthorn's* captain, "LCDR George Sepal was on the bridge, but ENS John Ryan had the conn. *Capricorn* began to turn left, but this would not allow the ships to pass port-to-port. Unable to make radio contact with the tender, *Capricorn's* pilot blew two short whistle blasts to have the ships pass starboard-to-starboard.

With the officer of the deck confused in regard to the standard operating procedure, *Blackthorn's* captain issued orders for evasive action."

When ships collided, the damage did not initially seem extensive, but the situation immediately worsened. *Capricorn's* anchor became imbedded in *Blackthorn's* hull and ripped open her port side. When the length of anchor chain became taut, it pulled against *Blackthorn's* weight and she capsized in seconds. Twenty-three members of the 50-man crew perished in the accident.

The actions of one young crew member contributed to the 27 lives that were spared in the incident. Seaman Apprentice William Ray "Billy" Flores, 19 and less than a year out of boot camp, and fellow crew member Larry Clutter threw lifejackets to their shipmates who'd jumped into the water. When *Blackthorn* began to sink, Clutter abandoned ship, but Flores remained aboard and used his own belt to strap open the door of the lifejacket locker, allowing additional lifejackets to float to the surface as the vessel went down. Although several crewmen attributed their survival to Flores' actions, his heroism was overlooked as officials investigated the accident. Thankfully, those who knew of his gallantry persisted in getting the Coast Guard to recognize his brave deeds. On September 16, 2000, Flores was posthumously honored with the Coast Guard Medal, the service's highest award for heroism not involving combat.

Services are held annually at the USCGC *Blackthorn* Memorial in St. Petersburg, Fla., to honor the memory of those lost in the worst peacetime disaster in Coast Guard history.



USS *BLACKTHORN* CREW LOST ON JANUARY 28, 1980

SS1 Subrino I. Avila
SNGM Randolph B. Barnaby
MK2 Richard D. Boone
SA Warren R. Brewer
QM2 Gary W. Crumly
DC2 Daniel M. Estrada
EM2 Thomas R. Faulkner
SA William R. Flores
SS3 Donald R. Frank
DC3 Lawrence D. Frye
QM3 Richard W. Gauld
SA Charles D. Hall
SA Glen E. Harrison
MK1 Bruce M. LaFond
FA Michael K. Luke
MK1 Danny R. Maxcy
SA John E. Prosko
SA George Rovolis Jr.
ET1 Jerome F. Ressler
CWO2 Jack J. Roberts
ENS Frank J. Sarna
EM3 Edward F. Sindelar, III
MKC Luther D. Stidhem

NAME	BRANCH	NAME	BRANCH
Adams, Hazen, Lavern, ADRC, USN	093	Horn, Charles, E, OSC, USN	MAL
Anderson, George, E, MMC, USN	MAL	Hunsinger, Gene, F, POC, USN	061
Andrew, Frank, R, POC, USN	034	Hunter, William, T, CWO3, USN	248
Arevalo, Tito, F, ENC/CPO, USN	MAL		
		Irwin, Richard, M, AVCM, USN	046
Baciewicz, Rufian, AKC, USN	358		
Balchunas, Robert, C, CDR, USN	042	Jackson, Jimmy, L, MSGT, USMC	137
Barnhill, James, C, PHC, USN	201	Jascenia, John, CPO, USN	MAL
Bartles, William, H, CDR, USN	MAL	Jeffers, John, YN1, USN	MAL
Bates, John, G, DK1, USN	047	Johnson, Donald, V, ICC(SS), USN	020
Benoy, Dean, H, AMSC, USN	068		
Berry, Eston, H, ADRC, USN	022	Kelleher, Cornelius, AT1, USN	MAL
Blocker, James, E, BMC, USN	022	Kellerhouse, C, Warren, MUC, USN	024
Boone, Victor, C, SMC, USN	099	Kenyon, Marvin, R, CSC, USN	005
Bowden, Cecil, E, BMCS, USN	MAL	Kleiber, William, W, AOC, USN	061
Bowen, Michael, R, RM1, USN	MAL		
Bubeck, Eric, A, COL, USMC	024	Lay, Clifford, A, EMC, USN	MAL
		Lusk, Archie, L, MMCM, USN	MAL
Campbell, Clarence, E, EMCM, USN	MAL	Maki, Robert, J, MMCS, USN	MAL
Carroll, Harold, F, MRC, USN	210	Manley, Bravitt, C, GMC, USN	257
Chappell, Sherman, W, CSC, USN	050	Mann, Peter, G, HMC(SS), USN	MAL
Clark, Albert, E, AMC, USN	MAL	Martin, Roy, L, EM3, USN	061
Compton, Louie, M, OS1, USN	MAL	Matthews, Thomas, ENC(SS), USN	046
Cooper, Neil, S, CAPT, USN	194	McCann, Carl, CAPT, USN	099
Couch, Joe, C, CSC, USN	MAL	McCoy, Paul, L, CWO3, USN	091
Cruise, Ralph, L, YNCM, USN	060	McHefey, Glenn, R, ATC, USN	070
		PNP, McIntyre, Charles, R, LT, USN	212
Daleiden, Terrence, M, ETCS, USN	061	Meagher, Everett, W, ENCS, USN	MAL
Davey, Raymond, L, BTC, USN	276	Mericle, David, L, ETCS, USN	030
Dawson, Wayland, J, HMC, USN	MAL	Miller, Clifford, C, BTCM, USN	MAL
Dellinger, Howard, W, ACCM, USN	MAL	Miller, Phillip, E, CWO4, USN	MAL
Devlin, David, PO2, USN	MAL	Miller, Dale, ETC, USN	MAL
Dingess, A, A, MSGT, USMC	181		
Dittmar, Charles, D, DPCS, USN	259	Navarro, Loreto, C, CPO, USN	022
Dooley, James, R, PO1, USN	156	Nelson, Perry, HT1, USN	MAL
Drew, James, E, ETC, USN	136	Nilsen, Jan, C, RMC(SW), USN	182
Dukes, Jack, W, CWO2, USN	043		
		Osbeck, Stanley, L, BTC, USCG	018
Epperson, Cecil, C, HMCS, USN	MAL	Osborne, John, W, LCDR, USN	047
PRPSC Farr, Francis T., ATCS, USN	222	Paris, Marvin, L, CS1, USN	204
Farrington, Andrew, P, DTC, USN	099	Parker, William, H, BTC, USN	MAL
Fine, Harvey, HM1, USN	251	Paulk, Alton, T, RMC, USN	MAL
Foster, Jack, Lamar, BMCM, USN	126	Pickett, Owen, B, HON Member	099
Fowlkes, Bobby, L, FTCS, USN	MAL		
		Radford, David, A, LCDR, USN	289
Gendvil, Vito, A, RM2, USN	285	Ramos, Manuel, D, RDC, USN	040
Giannotti, Andrew, CPO, USN	MAL	Rees, Jim, ETCS, USNR	278
Gosla, Calvin, B, GMGC, USN	077	Rheindt, Robert, L, BMC, USN	MAL
Gouvier, Edward, J, CAPT, USN	MAL	Roe, Ernest, A, AKC, USN	289
		Roth, David, P, FTCM(SS), USN	120
Halenza, Hal, R, CDR, USN	089	Rowlands, Thomas, J, ABEC, USN	146
Hall, Charles, W, AMSC, USN	MAL		
Harold, Charles, Paul, CWO4, USN	037	Senger, James, M, HMCM, USN	MAL
Hart, Jack, E, EM1 (SS), USN	348	Smith, Wayne, E, RMC, USN	061
Hevener, John, F, CWO2, USCG	051	Smith, Earl, L, SH1, USN	MAL
Hicks, Robert, K, SKCM, USN	060	Spencer, Carrol, T, AFMC, USN	101
Hill, Alice, B., CP1, 175		Starr, Don, L, MMC, USN	046
Hines, Laurence, R, EMCS, USN	163	Stone, Robert, H, HTC, USN	053
Honcharuk, John, P, LCDR, USN	038	Sumney, Wilbur, G, UT1, USN	327
Hoover, Thomas, R, BTCS, USN	223		



NAME	BRANCH
Tellas, Robert, F, LT, USN	046
Thomas, Joseph, E, ATC, USN	MAL
Tobin, John, E, HMC, USN	MAL
Towe, Charles, P, AMHC, USN	210
Trudgen, William, R, PO2, USN	MAL
Turley, Marion, C, LCDR, USN	099
Weil, Thomas, GMCS(SW), USN	123
Whewell, Robert, ENC, USN	366
Williams, Carl, PO2, USN	MAL
Winchester, Harold, J, BTC, USN	170
Woods, Joe, J, CPO, USN	MAL
Wotring, Frank, C, MMRC, USN	136
Wray, Kenneth, C, RMC, USN	024
Wright, Robert, L, MMC, USN	104

Names in red indicate 50 year continuous members.

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we owe to our departed Shipmates
and to those who guard the honor
of our country upon the sea,
under the sea, in the air
and upon foreign soil.
Let it be a reminder
of the faith they confide in us.
Let us who gather here
not forget our obligations
and in silence breathe a prayer
for our absent Shipmates.*

LT Charles R. McIntyre U.S. Navy, Retired 1930–2010

FRA National President
1982–1983

FRA Past National President Chuck R. McIntyre joined the staff of the Supreme Commander on November 30, 2010. He will be remembered for his personal integrity, his loyalty to his shipmates and his dedication to improving the Association.

Born in Springfield, Ill., and raised in Detroit, Mich., McIntyre joined the Navy in 1948. Following boot camp, he trained to be a Communications Technician (CT) and rose to the enlisted rank of Chief Communications Technician, serving as a member of the Naval Security Group community. He served aboard the USS *Georgetown* and shore tours in the U.S., Guam, the Philippine Islands, Japan and Germany. In 1965 he was commissioned as an ensign and, in 1969, McIntyre left active duty military service after attaining the rank of lieutenant. Following his military career, he continued to serve his country as a civilian, working as a management analyst for the Department of Defense for many years.

McIntyre joined FRA in 1954 and played an active role in branch, regional and national operations. He served as president of Branches 149 (Bremerhaven, Germany) and 212 (Meade, Md.). He held virtually every branch leadership position during his long FRA involvement, including secretary, board member and chairman of all standing committees. In 1976 he was elected to serve as vice president of FRA's East Coast Region and was elected to the post of regional president the following year. In 1981, his shipmates elected McIntyre as the Association's national vice president and then elected him to serve as FRA national president in 1982.

Shortly after assuming office, McIntyre suffered a major health setback and was told by his physicians that he could not fulfill the responsibilities as FRA's national president and continue his fulltime employment. As an example of his dedication to the Association and his shipmates, he took a six-month leave of absence from his job, without pay, to fulfill his leadership obligations. He traveled nearly 75,000 miles, visiting branches across the country and attending numerous regional gatherings, coordinating council meetings and retiree seminars.



During his tenure as the Association's senior elected official (1982–1983), FRA successfully opposed recommendations from the Grace Commission to require 30 years of military service (instead of 20) to be eligible for retired pay, reduce the multiplier for calculating retired pay and close all military commissaries. FRA also thwarted President Reagan's proposals to freeze military pay and make permanent reductions to retirees' cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs).

Following his term as national president, McIntyre served as a member of FRA's Employees' Pension and Legislative Services Committees, and multiple stints as chairman of the Association's Committee on Constitution, Bylaws and Resolutions. He was often called "Mr. CBL&R" because of his thorough knowledge and understanding of FRA's governing documents. He was also chosen to serve as national parliamentarian and advisor for several national presidents who followed in his footsteps.

Shipmate Past National President McIntyre raised nine children with his late wife, Mavis, who served as national chaplain for the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association. They had a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren. Their eldest son, Charles, is a past regional president for the Association's West Coast Region.

Brazil Expedition Uncovers Thousands of Carats of Exquisite Natural Emeralds

Brandish a whopping 50 carats of genuine South American emeralds in a handcrafted new necklace design for less than \$200.... and get a \$100 Stauer Gift Coupon!

Halfway into our ambitious trek through the rain forest I had to remind myself that "Nothing good comes easy." These days it seems that every business trip to Brazil includes a sweltering hike through overgrown jungles, around cascading waterfalls and down steep rock cliffs. But our gem broker insisted it was worth the trouble. To tell you the truth, for the dazzling emeralds he delivered, I'd gladly go back to stomping through jaguar country.

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Faced with this embarrassment of riches, our designer transformed this spectacular cache of large stones (each is over 8 carats average weight) into a stunning 50 ctw necklace of faceted emeralds set into .925 sterling silver. Each emerald is surrounded by delicate sterling silver rope work and filigree in the Bali-style. The 18" necklace dangles from a sterling silver chain that fastens with a secure double-sided shepherd's hook clasp.

What is the source of our emerald's timeless appeal?

The enchanting color of the Stauer **Carnaval Faceted Emerald Necklace** comes from nature's chemistry. Our polished and faceted, well-formed natural emeralds are immediately recognized as something special. Indeed, when we evaluated these emeralds, color was the most important quality factor. Today, scientists tell us that the human eye is more sensitive to the color green than to any other. Perhaps that is why green is so soothing to the eye, and why the color green complements every other color in your wardrobe.

Emeralds are, by weight, the most valuable gemstone in the world.

Now you can wear genuine emeralds and feel great about knowing that you were able to treat yourself to precious gems without paying a precious price. A 100+ carat emerald necklace found on Rodeo Drive or 5th Avenue could cost well over \$250,000...but not from Stauer. Wear and admire the exquisite Stauer **Carnaval Faceted Emerald Necklace** for 30 days.

Special Offer
Receive a \$100 Stauer Gift Coupon with the purchase of this necklace. **Yes, you read that right.**

"You will rarely find an emerald necklace with 50 carats and certainly not at this price!"

— **JAMES T. FENT, Stauer GIA Graduate Gemologist**



A.
50 ctw of genuine emeralds. Enlarged to show details.

If for any reason you are not dancing the Samba with pure satisfaction after receiving your faceted emerald necklace, simply return it to us for a full refund of the purchase price. But we're confident that when you examine this stunning jewelry, you'll be reminded of the raw beauty of the Amazon rain forests mixed with the flash and dazzle of the exotic Carnival in Rio de Janeiro. **Call Today. This cache of genuine emeralds is extremely limited.**

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- D. Carnaval Bracelet** (50 ctw) **\$189** +S&P

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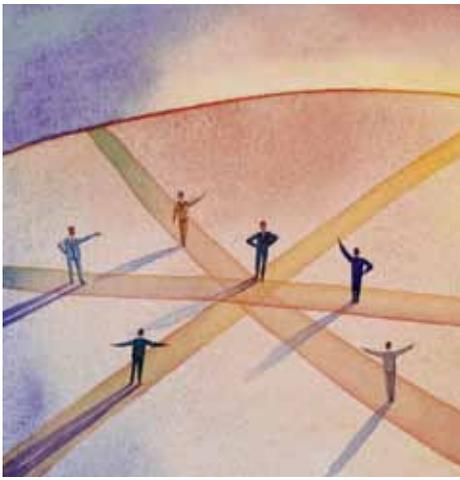
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Stonewall Jackson (SSBN 634)

September 7–10, 2011, Springfield, Mo. Contact Bob La Bonte, 310 Crawford Dr., Victoria, TX 77904, 361-676-2839, webmaster@634shipstore.com.

USS Brownson (DD-518 & DD-868)

May 19–23, 2011, Plymouth Mtng, Pa. Contact Joseph D. Eliff, 27 Roboda Blvd., Royersford, PA 19468, 610-948-6475, Josepheliff@ussbrownson.com.

USS Greenwich Bay

September 29–October 2, 2011, Jacksonville, FL. Contact Martin Brown, ussgreenwichbay@gmail.com.

USS Phillippine Sea (CV/CVA/CVS/47)

September 29–October 02, 2011, St Louis, Mo. Contact Chuck Davis, 270 Mentel Terrace, Port Charlotte, FL 33952, 941-743-5460, philsea@embarqmail.com.

USS Robert A. Owens (DDK/DDE/DD 827)

September 15–18, 2011, Gurnee, Ill. Contact Keith Totsch, 200 Sheridan Ct., Waukegan, IL 60085, 847-445-9597, ktotsch@sbcglobal.net.

USS Shangri-La (CV/CVA/CVS-38)

September 6–11, 2011, San Francisco, Calif. Contact Ken Reightler, 1022 Charity Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23455, 757-422-4540, shangmem@cox.net.

Members can post reunions online at www.fra.org, submit to reunions@fra.org or mail to: FRA Reunions, 125 N. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314.

LOOKING FOR...



YN1 Joseph Kalinesen, wife Barbara

Last known assignment was ComFairWestPac, NAF Atsugi, Japan, in 1974–1976. I lost any information about anyone who has contacted me in the last 10 months. Please give me a call! I look forward to hearing back from my Navy buddy. Contact Robert (S.O.B) Blackmon at firevolley@aol.com or 850-475-9996.

VP-48, Other Patches

Looking for squadron patch from VP-48, stationed out of Moffett Field Naval Air Station, 1974–1977. Also looking for patches from MCAS Iwakuni, Japan; Misawa Air Base, Japan; Adak Air Base, Alaska; N.T.C. Lakehurst and N.T.C. Great Lakes. Contact Edgar W. Rousan Jr., 3115 A Keokuk Ave, St. Louis, Mo. 63118, 314-345-0504.

PNC Don Laster and EN1 Earl Wakefield

Last known address was Naval Station, Barbados, W.I. Contact MMC Adam Gay at 1gdad72@cox.net or 10213 Brilliant View Court, Las Vegas, NV 89129.

William (Bill) Macha

Stationed at Edzell, Scotland, around 1974–1975. He possibly went on to be a Navy diver. Please contact Dick Decker (living in New Zealand) at deckerdick@clear.net.nz.

Members of "AS" Division on board USS South Carolina (CGN-37)

Between September 1980 and May 1984. Contact Rick Hilsman (STGC, USN Ret.) at hilsmanmyrick@msn.com.

Members of the 1975 GTMO Pistol Team

Please contact Bill Farley, 411 Walnut Street, #1522, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043.

Shipmates of AMH1 John P. Kirby

He was attached to NAS Cubi Point, Philippines, and was a transport flight crew plane captain from 1969–973. Please call Ann Kirby (wife) at 352-854-1866 or e-mail at kirbyannm@embarq-mail.com with any information.

Shipmates from Boot Camp

Looking for shipmates from boot camp at Great Lakes N.T.C., Company 139, Caish Crusaders, June 22 to August 16, 1974. Contact Edgar W. Rousan Jr., 3115 A Keokuk Ave, St. Louis, MO 63118, 314-345-0504.

These notices are published on a space available basis. Notices must be submitted in writing. E-mail fratoday@fra.org or mail your request to: FRA, Looking for..., 125 N. West St., Alexandria, VA, 22314.

BRANCH 89 ATLANTA, GA.

Shipmates Wayne Barron and Don Lear shared the benefits of FRA membership with attendees at the USS Piedmont Reunion.



BRANCH 371 BATON ROUGE, LA.

Branch representatives visited the grand opening of the new Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Miss., and donated a check for \$1,000 to the Resident's Fund. Shipmate Bob Rutherford of Branch 307, who resides at the home, joined PRPSC Jerry Pugh; Laura Slack, chief of Residents' Services at the home; and Branch 371 President Jay Johnson to make the presentation.



BRANCH 254 MYRTLE BEACH, S.C.

Branch color guard members William Cole and Branch President Randy Stephenson participate in the Grand Strand Patriotic Alliance's Veterans' Day program in Myrtle Beach. (Photo by Myrtle Beach Sun News)

BRANCH 42 QUONSET POINT, R.I.

Shipmate Ken Waldron (left) is congratulated by Regional President New England Phil Justin for his 40 years of continuous FRA membership.



BRANCH 109 CLEARWATER, FLA.

Shipmate Michael DiSalvo was recognized by the City of Dunedin, Fla., for his outstanding service in the U.S. Navy. ET2 DiSalvo was mobilized aboard USNS Grapple (T-ARS-53), providing force protection as the ship sailed the Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Suez Canal, Gulf of Aden and known piracy areas off the coast of Somalia. During the 10,000+ nautical mile journey, he also earned his Surface Warfare and Expeditionary Warfare ratings, and completed a series of Homeland Security independent study courses.



BRANCH 5 NORFOLK, VA.

Honor and Remember founder George Lutz (center) presents a flag to Mary Clark while FRA PNP Tom Leisher (right) reads the accompanying certificate. Mrs. Clark's son, PFC Michael Hopkins, was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for deliberately exposing himself to enemy fire to give his comrades an opportunity to remove wounded from the immediate area.

**BRANCH 260 KINGMAN, ARIZ.**

Branch Vice President Don Nistendirk (rear) and eight other shipmates participated in the 2010 Veterans' Day parade held in Bullhead City, Ariz. Shipmate Montoya (marching in the background) is a parade regular, marching in the uniform he wore 30 years ago when he retired. Branch President Don Johnson (not shown) is driving the pull vehicle.

**BRANCH 94 CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS**

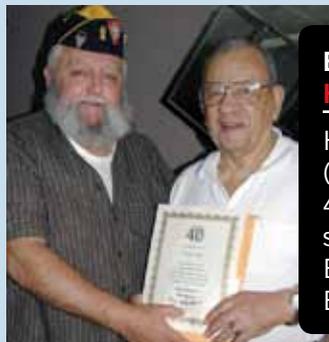
The annual active duty chili cookoff hosted by the commissary at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi is a great opportunity for shipmates to spread the word about FRA. A cooperative relationship has developed between the branch and store director Velma Siler, who invited FRA to return quarterly to share information. In return, the branch has agreed to promote the commissary benefit in its newsletter. Shown (l to r) are Dora and Rudy Canales, PRPSC Don Larson and Ms. Siler.

**BRANCH 93 PATUXENT RIVER, MD.**

Branch 93 proudly honored five Eagle Scouts in 2010 from Troop 413. Shown (l to r) are David Stansfield, Travis Cannon, Branch 93 President Anthony Smith, Andrew Morgan, Jacob Stansfield and Tanner Kellogg. The branch sponsors the troop, which has helped 34 young men achieve the rank of Eagle Scout in its 43 year history.

**BRANCH 186
HERNANDO, FLA.**

Harold Forbes (right) accepts his 40-year membership certificate from Branch President Bob Woods.



To submit a photo for *News From the Branches*, please e-mail a photo as an attachment in jpeg format to FRAToday@fra.org or mail a high-quality photograph to *FRA Today*, 125 N. West Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please include a brief description of the photograph and include the names of those pictured. Laser prints and scanned copies of photographs cannot be accepted.

Message from the National Vice President

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE for your support in electing me as your National Vice President. As National Vice President and Membership Chairman, I would like to encourage each of you to recruit new members and make them feel welcome when they attend meetings and other functions. I would like to bring back some of the ideas from Past National Presidents and Vice Presidents. When Doreen Huylebroeck was National Vice President she had an Auxiliary Membership list as follows:

M — Many members feel they cannot be “active” — explain to them that just by belonging is being an active member, as they are helping the Unit in community service projects, and they are also supporting the FRA’s voice on Capitol Hill when they lobby for us.

E — Encourage members to earn awards, such as the Blue Anchor Award, Gold Membership Pin, Silver Star, and Silver Anchor Award.

M — May you never sit back and wait for someone to speak first — if you see someone new at a meeting, be friendly and introduce yourself and remember how it was at your first meeting. Welcome her/him and they will be back.

B — Be prepared to explain what the Auxiliary of the FRA is all about. When asked we tend to tell about our Unit projects, however, don’t forget to mention the National Scholarships, Pilgrimage, and what the current National President has for her Project.

E — Establish a recruiting program in your Unit such as “Sign up 5 new or reinstated members and earn a year’s free dues”.

R — Remember to keep Unit meetings interesting. If you have new members attending, take a few minutes and explain different items to them. What you may take for granted may sound confusing to someone new.

S — Should we forget the prospective FRA member? **NO!** Sign them up and in turn they may have prospective

members for us. Remember to carry both applications with you.

H — Have some means of contacting members. Give a personal touch and appoint a phone committee to give them a call — whether to remind them of a meeting or just to say HI!

I — Is it possible to work with your Branch and plan a social or two just so everyone can get to know each other?

P — Please work with me on this, our biggest membership recruitment program ever. We can easily double our membership this year if we all work just a bit harder.

MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE: RETAINING MEMBERS — RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

Call members who did not renew their membership and ask them as to why. See if there is anything the Auxiliary could do that would encourage them to keep their membership current. Call members and let them know that we are thinking of them. Send out Christmas and/or birthday cards to members to let them know they are like family.

If you have any suggestions regarding membership do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail or telephone. I look forward to working with everyone on this project.

We had the honor of attending Veteran’s Day Ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery with FRA National Vice President Jeff Gilmartin, along with FRA National Executive Director Joe Barnes, FRA Regional President East Coast Chris Slawinski and LA FRA Regional President East Coast Karen Snee. It was a humbling experience to be in attendance with the United States Vice President Joe Biden and to observe the wreath laying ceremonies by all the Veteran’s Organizations.

FRA National Vice President Jeff Gilmartin and I also attended the Arizona Memorial in Tucson in December. We hope everyone had a merry Christmas and we wish you a healthy, prosperous and happy New Year. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Pilgrimage in April.



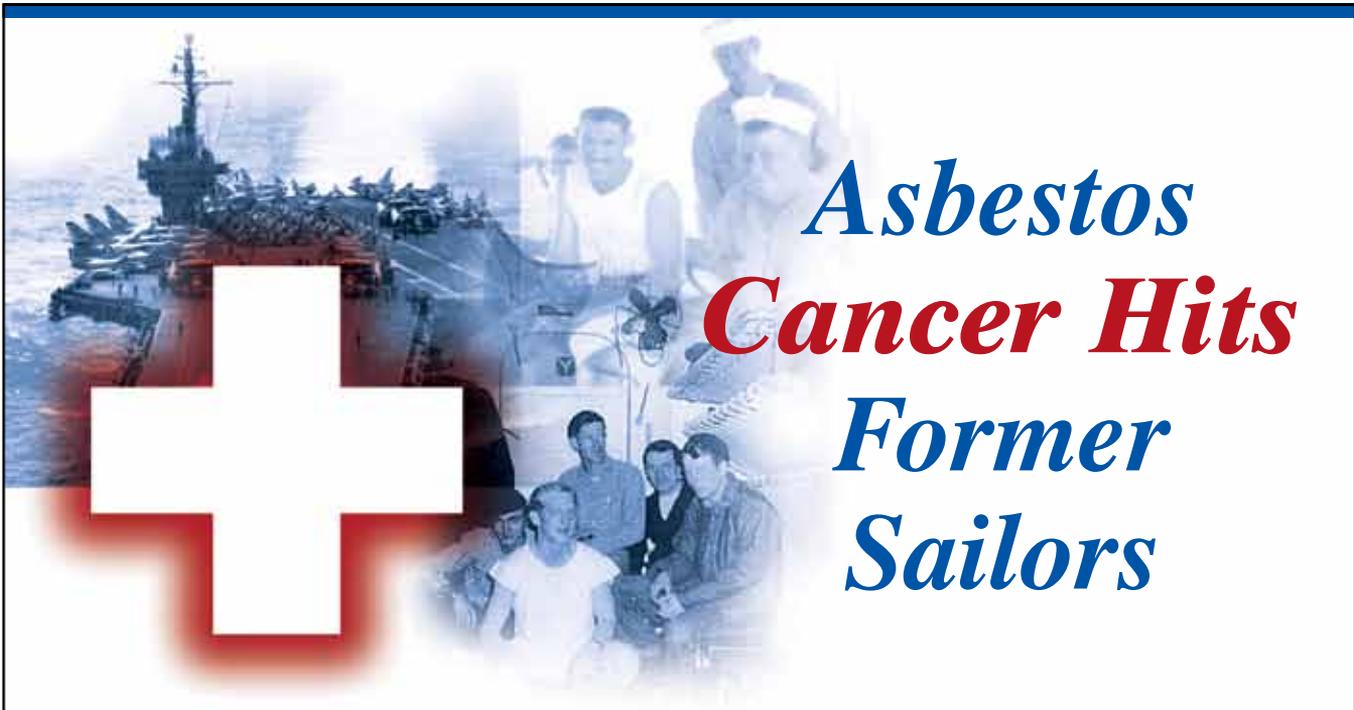
GINI C. LARSON
National Vice President



Membership Recruiting
Gini Larson,
National Vice
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Donald Larson,
PRPSC recruiting
at the Texas
Veterans Land
Board Veteran’s
Summit.



Fran Hoadley is the editor of *Auxiliary of FRA News* and the *FRA Today* Liaison.



Asbestos Cancer Hits Former Sailors

Many sailors who served their country proudly aboard ships in the World War II, Korean, and Vietnam War eras, are now being **diagnosed with asbestos-related cancers.**

FOR COMPENSATION INFORMATION:

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If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with MESOTHELIOMA OR ASBESTOS LUNG CANCER, please call us immediately to find out about the compensation you may be entitled to recover.

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We represent clients from all 50 states.

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1935 - 2008

U.S. Navy Retired

Member VFW, DAV, American Legion and the Fleet Reserve

Former National President of the Retired Enlisted Association and client of The Johnson Law Firm.



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